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# HANDEL'S MESSIAH.

*An Examination of the Original and of some  
Contemporary MSS.*

BY

W. G. CUSINS,

*Master of the Music to the Queen.*

LONDON :

*AUGENER & CO., 86, Newgate Street.*

MDCCCLXXIV.



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## HANDEL'S MESSIAH.

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So many now-a-days are anxious to give a hearing to the works of living English and foreign composers—a race often badly used by their contemporaries—that some people, on the other hand, are becoming afraid lest the favourite compositions that have had their warm sympathies for a long time should be cast aside for what they suppose to be crude and unmelodious, forgetting, it would seem, that the classical standard of to-day is just the one which former generations in their time treated as the very thing to be avoided. Apprehensions on this score are, however, groundless, and compositions having real backbone will maintain their ground, notwithstanding the onward march of music—now, perhaps, the most progressive of all the arts. Certainly, no works will continue to engage the attention of the world more than those of Handel. They are more studied than ever. The monumental edition of his creations now being issued by the German Handel Society is doing much to make his immense value known on the Continent, where, from the great majority of his compositions having been written in England, they had not hitherto been so frequently heard as their importance demanded. And here, I need not say, he has been the darling of the public for a century and a half—not without hindering, as has been

frequently pointed out, the natural development of music among us.\*

*Messiah*, the *Sacred Oratorio*, if not the most perfect of Handel's works, will ever be the one to which a Protestant people will cling on account of its subject.

The Puritans had driven art out of our churches, to be replaced by whitewash and Tate and Brady. Handel luckily gave us oratorio as a compensation; for he is the father of oratorio in England, and, indeed, of such oratorio as was never known before. It is true that, some hundred years before his time, Emilio del Cavaliere produced the first work of the class in Rome; after him came Colonna, Carissimi, Stradella, and others, writing oratorios on all kinds of subjects, some even interspersed with dances.† But all these were comparatively short works, in two parts, with a sermon preached between them. It was Handel who founded oratorio in its present dramatic extension and greatness of choral effect.

And these sacred epics, the grandest form of musical composition, are, I am proud to say, the special property of England. For Handel wrote them in our country and for our countrymen, and to his works I can confidently appeal in refutation of the silly prejudice that the language of Milton and Dryden, and above all the English Bible, is unmelodious and harsh to sing.

There are two points very remarkable in connection with *Messiah*. These are the time Handel took in writing

\* It cannot be too earnestly put forward that this exclusive veneration for certain men, great as they are by all allowed to be, such as Handel, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, is not unattended by the most depressing results.

† See Burney's History, vol. iv. A fresh edition of this important work is greatly needed.

the score, and the lack of instrumentation throughout the work. As to the former, it is well known that *Messiah* was written between the 22nd of August and the 14th of September, 1741, and hence most people conclude that twenty-four days were all which Handel took to compose fifty-six pieces of music, most of them long and elaborate. Now, there is no doubt that Handel had the power of throwing off work with wonderful rapidity, and on this point the testimony of Rossi, who arranged the Italian libretto of *Rinaldo* in 1711, may be alleged. "Mr. Handel," he says, "the Orpheus of our age, in setting it (*Rinaldo*) to music, scarcely gave me time to write, and to my great astonishment I saw an entire opera composed in the most perfect manner in not more than a fortnight." \*

If Handel took only twenty-four days to compose *Messiah*, that is but half the wonder, for *Samson*, a much more elaborately-scored work, was begun after *Messiah*, and, on this supposition, composed by the 29th of October of the same year. In fact, nearly all Handel's works were put to paper in the same quick manner. Two Italian operas, *Faramondo* and *Serse*, were written down between the 15th of November, 1737, and the 14th of February, 1738.

But Dr. Burney, who speaks of Handel from personal recollection, says of him,† "He spent so studious and sedentary a life, as seldom allowed him to mix in society, or partake of public amusements." Now, if Handel spent

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\* "Il Signor Hendel, Orfeo del nostro secolo, nel porla in musica appena mi diede tempo di scrivere, e viddi con mio gran stupore, in due sole settimane armonizzata al maggior grado di perfezzionne un opera intiera."

† Account of the Commemoration of 1784.

such a life, what was he doing during the comparatively long intervals between his various compositions? I believe, either composing *da mente*, or making sketches, which he tore up, for very few are in existence. At all events, in his correspondence with Mr. Jennens, we find him on the 9th of June, 1744, begging for the first act of *Belshazzar*, which he only began, according to the MS., at Buckingham Palace, on the 23rd of August; on the 13th of September he writes again, "it still engages me warmly." The last page of the MS. being lost, we do not know when it was finished.\* Mendelssohn, too, who was a prolific and, on occasion, a rapid writer—witness the *Ruy Blas* overture—evidently does not believe Handel composed as he wrote, for, in his preface to his edition of *Israel in Egypt*, he is careful to speak of the "great haste with which Handel used to *write down* his works." It may be well here to mention also a letter which Mozart, a year or so before his death, wrote from Leipzig to a certain baron who had asked for a work from his facile pen, where he rebukes him by saying that, though he was supposed to write with such ease, no one had ever studied composition more seriously than he had.

Great work requires great pains, and Handel, I believe, gave more time to thought than is usually imagined.

As to the instrumentation of *Messiah*, why Handel made the score so meagre has always been a matter of wonderment to me. There is apparently nothing to account for it. Certainly there were plenty of good instrumentalists in his day, if performers could be found to grapple with the trumpet parts of Bach and Handel,

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\* This correspondence is to be found in Horsley's excellent preface, and also in Schoelcher's Life.

the horn parts in "See, the conquering hero comes," the violin ciaccona of Bach, &c. Then, again, *Saul* and *Israel* (both written in 1738) are full of beautiful effects for wood and brass; both have very fine and full trombone parts (unfortunately not habitually used), and *Samson*, composed, as we have seen, immediately after *Messiah*, is scored for eight-part chorus and fullest orchestra (the trombone parts being probably lost), with even two distinct viola parts; only clarionets are wanting.

I had thought that *Messiah* was probably written specially for Dublin, where Handel hardly hoped to find a large and efficient band; but here we are met by the fact that it was only given in some supplemental performances there, having been preceded by *L'Allegro* (requiring a flute-player of the first order), *Esther*, *Saul*, &c., with also concertos for the organ and other instruments. The paucity of instruments is therefore an enigma. No wood wind instrument is once mentioned in the whole score (the chorus "Their sound is gone out" has two hautboys, but this piece was subsequently written), and, except for the trumpets in three numbers and the obbligate in "The trumpet shall sound," with the drums in two pieces, it is scored as if it were a mere drawing-room cantata.

Yet it would be easy to point out much instrumentation—some of quite a modern order—in the operas and earlier oratorios of Handel. I have spoken of *Saul* and *Israel*; the effect of holding notes for the hautboys and bassoons in the chorus "But as for his people" is both modern and beautiful. *Rinaldo* has a piccolo, two flutes, and a violetta in the celebrated bird-song;\* it has also

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\* Addison, in the *Spectator* for March 6th, 1771, ridicules the letting loose of live sparrows on the stage during its performance.

four trumpets in a *battaglia*.\* *La Resurrezione*, an oratorio in two parts, on the old Italian model, written in Rome in 1708, has quite a parade of scoring—4 violins, viola, 2 flutes, 2 hautboys, bassoons, viol da gamba, an oboe sordo, 2 trumpets and basses. Bach, in his *Kirchen Cantaten*, Nos. 63 and 64, uses in the first 4 trumpets, in the second a cornetto and 3 trombones. Variety of instrumentation in accompanying voices is by no means a modern invention, however much treatment may have altered, for Monteverde,† in his *Orfeo*, *Favola in Musica*, employs the following curious instruments:—

Duoi Gravicembani,	Tre Bassi da Gamba,
Duoi Contrabassi de Viola,	Quattro Tromboni,
Dieci Viole da Brazzo,	Un Regale.
Un Arpa Doppia,	Duoi Cornetti.
Duoi Violini piccoli alla Francese,	Un Flautino alla vigesima seconda,
Duoi Chitaroni,	Un Clarino con tre trombe sordine.
Duoi Organi di Legno,	

There is, then, nothing to account for the slightness of the scoring in *Messiah*, and the oratorio containing some

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\* Handel frequently employs three trumpets, or two trumpets and principale. About this latter, in Sir George Smart's edition of the Dettingen *Te Deum*, a passage is quoted from Heinrich Koch's *Musikalisches Lexikon* to this effect:—"Prinzipal-blasen is a common expression in the use of the trumpet, and indicates a crashing (or martial) style of performance, for which only the middle tones of the instrument are used."

† Monteverde founded opera within a year or so of Emilio del Cavaliere's invention of Oratorio—about 1600—at which time, it may also be useful to remember, these two musicians shared with Peri and Caccini the honour of first introducing recitative. (See Burney's fourth volume.) *Monteverde's Orfeo*, on perusal, appears to be somewhat ugly music.

of the most granite-like choruses which even Handel wrote, and which are destined to hand his fame down to remotest time, is conceived in the simplest form of instrumentation imaginable. Here is the grandest art effected with the simplest possible means. Four voices, generally doubled by the strings aided by the organ, and in two or three pieces accompanied by trumpets and drums : such is the groundwork of *Messiah*. It stands alone in music in this respect. But although the score consists of so few parts, its composer wished to have them multiplied by every possible instrument. Burney, in his account of the 1784 Commemoration, says :—"Indeed, Handel was always aspiring at *numbers* in his scores and in his orchestra; and nothing can express his grand conceptions but an omnipotent band. The generality of his productions in the hands of a few performers, is like the club of Alcides, or the bow of Ulysses, in the hands of a dwarf."

It will be useful to speak here of the balance and formation of the orchestra in Handel's time, and since then up to the present.

He is credited by his enemies with being fond of noise; at all events it is on record that "Handel's (opera) band is uncommonly powerful."\* We have seen that he employed four horns, sometimes four trumpets, with trombones, and the wood wind probably doubled, possibly trebled, for numbers of hautboys and bassoons were then found in all orchestras.† This was in the prosperous days of the Royal Academy. Later on, in the oratorios given at Covent Garden, which were towards the last also financially productive, he had most probably a very large orchestra, but I have not found any list of these

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\* See Schoelcher's Life, chap. v.

† His own later opera speculation was perhaps carried on with a little less splendour.





## SINGERS.

## SERVANTS.

Sigra. Frasi ...	£6	6	Evens ...	£	10	6
Sigr. Ricciarelli ..	5	5	Condell ...	10	6	
Mrs. Scott ...	3	3	Mason ...	10	6	
Mr. Beard ...	„	„	Green ...	10	6	
Mr. Champness ...	1	11	6	<del>Thomas, Mr.</del>		
6 Boys ...	4	14	6	<del>Handel's man</del>	10	6
Bailden ...	1	1	John Duburgh ...	1	1	0
Barrow ...	1	1	The Music porters ...	1	11	6
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Munck ...	10	6	In all ...	£51	17	6
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Walz ...	10	6	man, absent ...	10	6	
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J. C. Smith, orgst. }  
Howard. }

May 10th, 1759, Recd. of Mr.  
Lancelot Wilkinson, the sum of  
fifty-six pounds twelve shillings,  
in full of all demands,

by me

(Signed) CHRISTOPHER SMITH.

The absence of Handel's man is a touching incident.

The performance took place in the chapel, holding—before the new galleries were added—about a thousand people (“without swords and hoops”), and it will be seen there were twelve violins, with four hautboys, and four bassoons, the “tenners” being especially weak.

In 1784, then supposed to be the centenary of his

birth,\* there was given, in Westminster Abbey, under the patronage of George III., who had a great love for Handel's works, a grand commemoration of Handel, very fully chronicled by Dr. Burney, from whose book, now scarce, the strength of the orchestra and chorus on that occasion is given. It consisted of the following numbers :

Viol <sup>o</sup> . I. ... .. 48	Bassoons ... .. 26
Viol <sup>o</sup> . II. ... .. 47	Double Bassoon ... .. 1
Violas ... .. 26	Horns ... .. 12
Cellos ... .. 21	Trumpets ... .. 12
Double Basses ... .. 15	Trombones ... .. 6
Flutes ... .. 6	Drums ... .. 3 pairs
Hautboys ... .. 26	Double Drums 1 pair

#### VOICES.

Sopranos ... 60 (of whom 47 were boys)	Tenors ... 83
Altos ... 48 (all men)	Basses ... 84

These numbers also include the principal singers.

Total Band ... ..	250
Total Singers ... ..	275

525

What should we say now to having 26 hautboys and 26 bassoons in such a force ?

Performances were after this given every year in the Abbey for several successive years, and in 1791 I find the following still more extraordinary combination :—

140 Violins,	22 Trumpets,
43 Altos,	9 Trombones,
18 Cellos,	1 Serpent,
21 Double Basses,	2 pairs of Drums,
40 Hautboys and Flutes,	And a Chorus of about
42 Bassoons,	500 voices.
12 Horns,	

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\* Handel was really born on the 23rd of February, 1685. See Chrysander's "Handel," page 9.

The numbers of wind instruments here will strike every one as being altogether out of proportion to the rest, and the effect must have been harsh in the extreme—at least, modern ears would have found it so.

I think I can show that to-day we have made the contrary mistake of using too little wood wind in our orchestras. This has crept on us gradually during the century, for when Mozart's accompaniments were first used to *Messiah* in this country, under Sir George Smart's direction, at Covent Garden, on January 13th, 1813, the numbers were—14 first violins, 14 second violins, 8 violas, 6 cellos, 6 basses, 4 hautboys, 4 clarinets, 4 horns, and 4 bassoons, with a chorus of some 60 or 70 voices; and thirty or forty years ago there were still four hautboys to be found in the Ancient Concert Band. The proper balance in our orchestras now is lost by only having single wood to cope with the array of strings which it is usually the passion to collect. The question of expense attending the doubling of the wood is at once met by simply engaging eight extra wood wind instrument performers instead of eight string performers in a band of some eighty players.\*

To give Bach and Handel with single wood is certainly a great injustice. I will only ask my readers to think of the weakness of the hautboys in the "Hailstone" chorus, and the sinfonia to the third part of *Solomon*, and of the flutes in the first chorus of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, alternating with three trumpets, drums, &c. With regard, too, to the French hautboy now in use

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\* The band of the late Schumann-Fest in Bonn had double wood, gaining greatly thereby in mellowness. It is true the band mustered 120 performers, and fully required it. Birmingham has double wood, but then the band is much larger still.

("avec sa petite voix aigre-douce," as Berlioz says), it must not be forgotten that it is played with a reed about half the size of the old English and German instrument, and consequently is much softer in tone. Many modern composers aim at effects of brass, and sometimes ignore what I believe to be the superior claims of the wood band. At all events, take any modern score, and it will be found that there are but eight wood instruments against ten brass, the consequence being that in an ordinary *forte* passage the wood is completely crushed. Any conductor who has directed a band of thirty or thirty-five players will at once recollect the delicious effects of wood he has heard, which in large orchestras are effectually covered by masses of strings and the superior force of the brass.

Beethoven wished for sixty players only in his symphonies, and his wood is usually as two to one compared with his brass.

Wagner has undoubtedly sought to redress the want of balance by using the wood in threes, and by a different disposition of the score. He also, in Beethoven's 9th Symphony, at bar 7, page 61 of Schott's original edition, in order to bring out the wood, makes the powerful strings play, not *ff*, but *mf*. Wagner knows well enough that the passage loses terribly in vigour; a doubling or trebling, if necessary, of the wood would do away with the necessity for any such modification.\*

Our military bands are very deficient in wood, and would be better, too, for having the corno inglese, the corno di bassetto, the bass clarinet, and double bassoon. Too much is now sacrificed to the blatant cornet and other easy valve instruments. The presence of so many Sax valve instruments in French military bands takes all colour out of them, and the stage band in *Le Prophète*, when I heard that opera in Paris, had no trumpet-tone whatever in the march.

To finish my remarks about the orchestra, I will just allude to the engagement of horn, hautboy, and bassoon players at the Foundling Hospital performance of 1759, although these instruments are nowhere mentioned in the original score. It is easy to see that the two latter either doubled the voices or the strings, but the horns must have had special parts written for them. These are now probably lost, and, if found, I do not think they would be used, for Handel, according to the fashion of the time, wrote habitually too high both for that instrument and for the trumpet.\*

Before entering on a critical examination of the score, it will be well to say something of the vocalists of Handel's day, and the style of music he wrote for them.

It has been said that the songs of his later days were not so good as those he wrote when first in England, because he then wrote for a less gifted set of singers. It is possible that he never, after the first twelve or fifteen years of his opera career,† had such a troupe to compose for as Cuzzoni, La Faustina (the wife of Hasse), Senesino, and even Boschi ; but incontestably his most elevated, and even, perhaps, his most dramatic songs are to be found in his incomparable oratorios, and I venture to say it requires as much vocal cultivation and dramatic sensibility

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\* A history of instrumentation is really greatly needed : most ample materials are at hand.

† Comparatively few people know that Handel, before he took definitely to oratorio, was the greatest composer of Italian operas of his day—besides being an *impresario*, a great organist, and performer on the harpsichord, hautboy, and violin. Handel was fifty-six years old when, in 1741, he composed *Messiah*, and it was the practice of writing for the stage (sometimes two, even three operas in one year) that gave him the power of creating this and his great dramatic oratorios.

to sing through one of these great works as to perform in any opera I know. His oratorio music is always difficult, and was composed to display the ability of the best opera singers obtainable, after the break-down of his own opera speculation and that of his rivals. It may be said that nearly all the most renowned singers of Handel's oratorios have distinguished themselves on the stage. Those of his own time were Signora Avolio, Signora Francesina (her real name was Elizabetta Du Parc),\* Mrs. Cibber (Arne's sister, and a daughter-in-law of Colley Cibber), more celebrated perhaps as a tragic actress; Guadagni, a famous counter-tenor (and equally famous billiard-player); Beard, the tenor, who created great scandal by marrying Lord Waldegrave's daughter, and who, by the way, *en secondes noces*, took to wife the daughter of a harlequin (Rich); Rheinhold, his bass, &c.

Many of Handel's choruses are so exacting that Mozart, in his edition of *Messiah*,† has given much of those containing "divisions"‡ to the solo quartett of vocalists. Certainly the "divisions" in the chorus "And he shall purify" are rarely sung with accuracy, except by the most practised choirs. For difficulty of interval, too, no chorus I know is so ungrateful, even disagreeable to sing, as "All power in heaven above," in *Theodora*. Boys were

\* This lady, evidently a great favourite with Handel and the public, it was who sang, with his consent and probably at his particular request, the popular songs, "Angelico splendor," "Cor fedele," &c., between the great choruses of *Israel in Egypt*, to make the work attractive. She appears to have been a dancer likewise, for on one occasion "The Francesina performed several *dances* to the entire satisfaction of the Court" (at Kensington).

† Published by Breitkopf and Härtel.

‡ The old name for runs or roulades.

apparently exceedingly well trained a century since, for they are found in great numbers in all the lists I have seen, and some gifted boy was often put forward by Handel to sing the most important songs. The altos, it will have been seen, were all men, and from the relative terms paid at the Foundling performance mentioned, the chorus were probably all more or less capable of singing solos. I mean they were singers in the best church and cathedral choirs, and perhaps the same distinct line between solo and chorus singing was not then drawn as now.

It may be mentioned here that a chorus in one of Handel's operas mostly meant, with hardly any exception, a mere *ensemble* of the chief characters as a wind-up to the work.

Having had under my care for some time now a large number of Handel's MSS., I have been naturally led to examine them, though not indeed as much as I hope to do. In going through that of *Messiah* several details struck me as having been overlooked, and I felt that some few things about which there is even now confusion and doubt required looking into. About a year ago Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley obligingly lent me his MS. copy by Smith, containing also several pieces, as will presently appear, wholly in Handel's handwriting, not to be found in the Buckingham Palace MS. From this copy Handel apparently directed not only at the first performance in Dublin, but as I find he has written over several of the songs the name of a singer (Guadagni) who, from all accounts, first came to England in 1748, also afterwards in London. In fact, it was evidently the conducting score generally used by Handel, although the Hamburg copy, also by Smith (in the famous set of 126 volumes of conducting scores picked up by M. Schoelcher at Bristol some years back, and sold by him to the city of Hamburg), is supposed

to be the one he used during the last few years preceding his total blindness. This latter, through the kindness of Dr. Chrysander, I have also been able to examine, besides another contemporary MS. in the possession of Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, and the Foundling Hospital copy.

After the original MS. no copy is so deeply interesting as that belonging to Sir F. Ouseley (which I will call the Dublin copy), for it is full of minute directions in Handel's handwriting. I will speak of no other marks but his, and I believe my acquaintance with his MSS. enables me to determine accurately what are Handel's and what are not. The excellent fac-simile of the original MS. issued in photo-lithography by the Sacred Harmonic Society, with the sanction of the Queen, allows every one to see what is in the Buckingham Palace score; therefore my remarks will to a great extent bear upon what is to be found in the Dublin copy, which has hitherto not been subjected to the critical examination it deserves.

The overture (Handel calls it in his MS. "sinfonia") is a very conventional piece, constructed on the model which Lulli (1634—1687) seems to have established, much in the same manner as Haydn afterwards dictated the form of the modern symphony to the world. It is not by any means his best overture. *Esther*, written twenty-one years before, is much finer; and the *Samson* sinfonia, composed just after *Messiah*, also greatly exceeds it both in beauty and power. The operas of Lulli, such as *Phaeton* and *Cadmus*, have overtures with the dotted note introduction and fugal *allegro*; so have many of Steffani's operas\*—

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\* The Abbate Steffani's operas, which served Handel somewhat as models, were chiefly written for the Electoral Court of Hanover, where they were performed with great scenic splendour and wealth of costume, machinery, and dances, in the open air at Herrenhausen. See Chrysander's "Handel" for a full account of them.



*Orlando Generoso* and *La Libertà Contenta*, for instance—and a large majority of Handel's operas have overtures fashioned in this particular mould.

A most important subject to be considered is the manner in which the dotted note and that following it in these introductions ought to be played.

Three bars of the *Belshazzar* overture will, I believe, determine how Handel wished them to be interpreted. In the first half of the third bar he has, by accident, given the true reading :—



I think, when consideration has been given to these bars, no one will doubt that the note following the dot in the first half of bars 1 and 2 should be played, not with mathematical correctness, but simply as a short note, in fact, as the semiquaver in bar 3. Lulli, Steffani, and Handel, it must not be forgotten, knew nothing of the modern refinements of double dots, and the text of those days was not expected to be rendered as we should now perform a piece by Beethoven, or Mendelssohn, or Schumann.

Dr. Crotch, in his preface to the Anthems edited by him for the London Handel Society, distinctly says, in reference to such matters as dotted rests, notes with double dots, many *pianos* and *fortes*, *crescendos* and *diminuendos*, &c. :—"It was the custom formerly for the composer to

teach these particulars at the numerous rehearsals, instead of depending on the notation." That Handel's notation is often vague, sometimes capricious, is to be seen in his Dettingen *Te Deum*, and Sir George Smart says in his preface to his edition of that work, undertaken for the London Handel Society :—"At page 24 it is *now usual* to play the first bar—



and all the similar bars thus :\*—



making the first note a semiquaver ; but with the exception of the first bar in page 34, which *Handel has written as at B*, . . . all the similar bars in this movement are as at A ; consequently I have considered it to be my duty to adhere to his notation." I have examined the original MS., and find that there this first bar of page 34 of Sir G. Smart's edition is written as at A for the second trumpet, and as at B for the hautboy, an irrefutable proof that a quaver might stand either for a quaver or a semiquaver.

Mozart, in his score, has put modern notation in several pieces—among others, the recitative "Thus saith the Lord," the chorus "Surely he hath borne," and in "The trumpet shall sound." He should have added double dots

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\* What a state of confusion things had got into !

in the overture, which should unquestionably be played thus :\*—



After considering the question of dotted notes very fully, I happened to mention it to Sir George Elvey, who placed in my hands an arrangement of the overture and choruses in *Messiah* for the organ, by Dr. Crotch, with which I was not acquainted. In that arrangement I find the overture printed with double dots as above ; the chorus “Behold the Lamb of God,” thus :—



Behold the Lamb of God.

—a reading to be earnestly recommended ; the *adagio* at the end of “All we like sheep,” with double dots ; and the opening of “The Lord gave the word,” also with double dots. I understand that in his arrangement of the Hailstone chorus he again commences with a semiquaver and not a quaver chord, and treats the next few bars in similar manner. I am confident this is the right tradition, for it appears, on the authority of Sir George Elvey, and

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\* I am permitted to say that Sir W. Sterndale Bennett is of this opinion, and Sir F. Ouseley also favours it. The former instanced movements by Bach, and even by Beethoven, that could not be performed as written.

his brother the late Dr. Stephen Elvey, that Dr. Crotch had played all these movements with Dr. Randall at Cambridge. Now Dr. Randall, as a chorister in the Chapel Royal, was the first person who sang the part of Esther in London in 1731, and later on he was a viola player in Handel's orchestra when his great oratorios were first given to the world. Surely Randall cannot have deceived Crotch. At this time we are so accustomed, and rightly, to play everything exactly as it is written, that we are falling into the error of supposing that music of the last century is to be treated in like manner; but as Mr. G. A. Macfarren, in a note to me, aptly puts it, "the modern system of literal exactitude, at the cost of spiritual fidelity, ignores tradition, and stiff and clumsy are the results."

At the commencement of the fugue both Crotch and Horsley give an E in the bass. Handel, in conducting,\* probably played this note on the organ, as cathedral organists do in old music, to start the movement; in fact the subject starting in tonic harmony requires the E after the dominant chord at the end of the *Grave*. In the Dublin copy I find Handel has made two cuts in pencil in this fugue—one of three bars, thirty-three bars from the end; the other of eight bars, twelve bars from the end. The end of the movement is generally taken *adagio*; probably this is a proper reading, though Handel does not mark it so.

In the Dublin copy the following names appear in pencil over "Comfort ye" and "Every valley:"—Beard (three times), Mr. Lowe, and Signora Avolio; so that Handel permitted these pieces to be sung by a soprano

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\* Apropos of Handel's conducting, Burney relates that "at the close of an air, the voice with which he used to cry out 'Chorus!' was extremely formidable indeed."

(Catalani was also in the habit of singing them). In this copy I find, too, a cadenza for the finish of the air; it is in Smith's handwriting, and is too curious not to be given:—

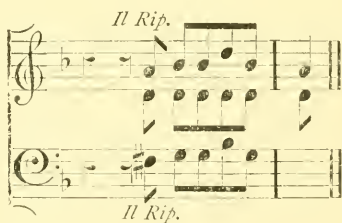


The recitative "Thus saith the Lord" in the Dublin copy has the names of Rheinhold, Savage, and Masson attached. The first version, now discarded, of "But who may abide" (Randall and Abell, page 21) was written for a bass; but the song with the *prestissimo* movement now sung was composed for an alto. In the Dublin copy we have Handel's original MS. of this version, a fact I think never before noticed, or Schoelcher would not have said what he does at page 259 of his Life. Handel in this copy crosses out the early bass version, and writes over it, "For Guadagni," and then composes the alto version, in *alto clef*, again writing over that "For Guadagni." There has always been much dispute about the voice which ought to sing this song, but the Dublin copy puts an end to it now that an examination proves the original MS. of the alto version to be here in existence. Randall and Abell, Horsley, and Novello, all print this version wrongly for a bass voice, but Arnold gives the right notes though in the treble clef. The Hamburg copy, besides the alto version, has a transposition into G minor for soprano, while the Foundling Hospital copy has the alto version and a transposition into A minor. Possibly, when Guadagni was no

longer available, Handel preferred it being sung by a soprano. He was not particular as to what key his music was sung in, for his MSS. and conducting scores are full of marks indicating transpositions. But the first intentions of a composer are not altered by these temporary variations, and the fact remains that the version of "But who may abide" with the *prestissimo* was composed in D minor and written in the alto clef.

It is said the air was cut out at the first performance in Dublin, and a recitative substituted, doubtless on account of the non-success at rehearsals of the very stiff bass version, but of this I am unable to discover the original MS. The recitative is given by Arnold in an appendix.

Handel has put no *tempo* mark to the chorus "And he shall purify," but I find the Italian duet from which it is taken is marked *andante*. In many editions it is marked *allegro*. Mozart has directed this chorus to be sung as a quartett for the first 20 bars, at the end of which he brings in the additional wind with the chorus. At bar 15 in the Dublin copy, Handel has inserted the following notes for second violin, viola, and basso, thus doing away with the thinness of the harmony:—



At the end of the recitative "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," the words "God with us" in the original score are written at least treble the ordinary size—an indication, doubtless, of religious feeling. According to the Dublin

score this recitative and following air were sung by Mrs. Cibber, Guadagni, Signora Galli, and Miss Young. The air was at one time transposed a fifth higher to A, the original key being resumed when the chorus comes in. At the 16th bar from the end occurs one of the few marks of bowing in the original score. Burney, when alluding to the original MSS., oddly calls them "foul" scores.

Rheinhold (twice mentioned) and Masson sang the following recitative and air, "The people that walked in darkness." In the original MS. the violas are curiously placed with the violins, thus, "V. unis e viola." Smith's MS. in Buckingham Palace puts the violas with the basses. In the chorus "For unto us," Mozart again gives much of the music to the solo quartett of singers.

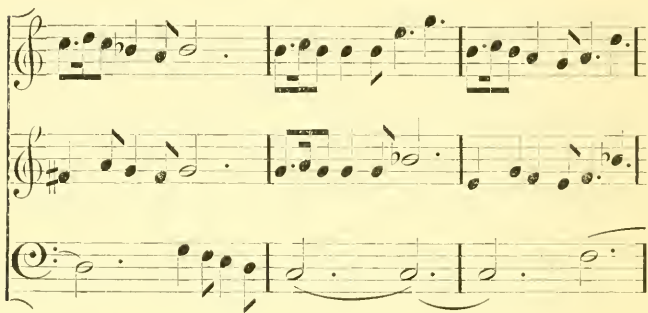
The Pastoral Symphony originally consisted simply of the eleven bars ending with the first double bar, and these only are given in the Hamburg score. Handel then added a second part, which is written on a small piece of paper bound up with the original score. In fact there are two versions of the second part, the one now played being on the front page of the inserted paper, while on the back is a second, never hitherto printed, and which I here give :—

*V. 1.*

*V. 2.*

*V. 3 all' Sva. col. V. 1. Alto all' Sva. col. V. 2.*

*Bassi.*



This second version (whether the first composed or not, I do not know) is crossed out by Handel, and the first is much superior, the sequence commencing at bar 4 above



being too long. A curious error is made in most editions, in leaving out in the Pastoral Symphony the third violin part, which doubles the melody an octave below. Randall and Abell omit it, as does Arnold, so do the parts printed, I believe, by Arnold ; those of Novello and Surman to this day have it not. This third violin part, however, is in both the Dublin and Hamburg conducting scores. Mozart has properly put in his score two violas with two violins, and this is what has been done by Dr. Rimbault in his edition published by the London Handel Society. The fact remains, however, that when played from existing orchestral parts the melody is not doubled, while the under part is,\* so that were it not for Mozart's first clarinet and first bassoon parts this melody would not be doubled at all, and I need not add that, in an orchestra where many stringed instruments are employed, the balance is entirely lost, even with Mozart's additions.

There is a passage in the first violin part in bar 9 which should be—



and not—



as printed in Arnold, London Handel Society, Novello, &c. ; the latter reading produces fifths — the existing orchestral parts are again wrong. All Smith's copies have the first reading, which corresponds with the original.

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\* I find that Dr. Crotch, in his organ arrangement, has fallen into the same error.

Mozart has, without reason I think, altered the opening from—



to—



The corresponding phrase at the beginning of the second part he has, however, left untouched.

It has generally been believed that the air version of "And lo!" was the first. A glance at the photolith facsimile of the original manuscript will at once show this not to be the case, for the end of "For unto us," the first part of the Pastoral Symphony, "There were shepherds," and the recitative "And lo!" are all written on the same leaf, and the air version of the last on an inserted paper, of which it covers the first page and two staves of the second, the rest being blank. With Handel's "customary economy of paper," this page would evidently have been filled up, had not this air been written subsequently for Mrs. Clive. In the Dublin copy the recitative has been pasted over at one time, showing conclusively that the air was written to supersede it. Handel certainly conceived the whole scene at first as it is now sung.

It is extraordinary that the prefix *Allegro* has been left out in all editions to the recitative "And suddenly." Sir Henry Bishop, in his edition of Handel's songs, pointed this out, but no one seems to have taken any notice of it. The London Handel Society puts *Andante con moto* without any authority whatever. The Dublin and Hamburg copies both have the *Allegro* marked. There is a

still more extraordinary omission before the chorus "Glory to God," where Handel first writes *In disparte* (aside); this he afterwards crossed out and substituted the following:—*Da lontano, e un poco piano* (from afar, and rather softly). This was intended evidently to indicate the gradual approach of the heavenly host, as the *piano*, *pianissimo* at the end may correspondingly depict the departure of them from the shepherds into heaven. The opening is generally marked *forte*, though there is no authority for this in any of Smith's copies or the original; the first *forte* occurs in the 10th bar, and the incongruous *forte* in bar 5 is not in Handel.\*

The Dublin score, again, has the original MS. of the common-time version of "Rejoice" (in the Buckingham Palace score the 12-8 version alone is to be found). Only the voice and violin parts, however, are in Handel's writing, the bass being by a copyist, written from the Buckingham Palace score, where a number of marks are to be seen showing the cuts, &c., which Handel required to be made for this new version.

In the Dublin and Hamburg scores the 34th and 35th bars are as follows:—



- - hold thy King cometh un - to thee.

Mozart puts this song for a tenor.

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\* Burney, in his account of the 1784 Commemoration, says:—"This magnificent chorus, in which the *pianos* and *fortes* were admirably marked and observed, never had so great an effect before in any performance within my knowledge. There is more *claire-obscur* in this short chorus than perhaps had ever been attempted at the time it was composed."

Handel sanctions the first half of "He shall feed his flock" being sung in F (a great relief to the ear, otherwise we have three long pieces in B flat in succession), for the Dublin copy has both the B flat and the F and B flat versions. Burney says of this song, "Guadagni, after Mrs. Cibber, (both altos) established its reputation." The Hamburg copy gives only the F and B flat version, and so does Smith at Buckingham Palace.

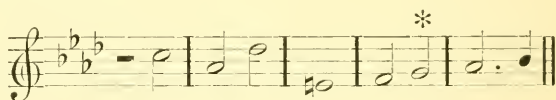
In the chorus "His yoke is easy," only the last eleven bars are given to the chorus by Mozart.

I have already spoken about the dots in the chorus "Behold the Lamb of God."

According to the Dublin copy, "He was despised" was at one time transposed a fourth higher, to A $\flat$  (!) for Signora Francesina. The omission of the natural before the A in bar 20 of this air is evidently a mere oversight.

The chorus "Surely he hath borne our griefs" again shows us how much more clearly Handel might have expressed his meaning, if dotted rests had been in use in his day.

Crotch has printed the opening of "And with his stripes" thus:—



which is right. All the answers to the subject have two minims in the fourth bar; this is a very important point. Turning to the original I find Handel first wrote two minims, then added a dot and filled up the loop of the second minim; altering his mind a second time, he smeared the dot and the filling up of the loop, leaving them, as originally, two minims. The continuo, written probably last, has only the two minims. Mozart gives

the subject properly. A glance at the photolith copy will show that he made several alterations at the beginning of the fugue. The movement, too, originally ended with a full close in F minor, and not on the dominant. The change is superb.

The movement of the Italian duet which was the foundation of the chorus "All we like sheep," opens, curiously enough, with the phrase of the first bar of the "Hallelujah" chorus:—



The recitative "All they that see him" is for tenor, as also is all the music of the Passion, including the air "But thou didst not leave;" but even Handel permitted sopranos to sing these pieces, for the Dublin copy has, besides the names of Beard and Low, those of Signore Frasi, Avolio, and Francesina, and "the Boy."

The introduction by Mozart of A natural to the first note in the bass in bar 20 of "He trusted in God" has created some confusion. It should be A flat, Mozart has made the basses commence this fugue immediately after the chord of E flat of the preceding recitative, thus cutting out a bar and the chord of C minor altogether.

In the chorus "Lift up your heads," Handel and Smith's copies give the Bible version of the words "Who is *this* King of Glory?" "*The* King" is easier, perhaps, to sing, but "*this* King" is decidedly more forcible.

In the Dublin copy we have evidence that the bass version of "Thou art gone up" (by far, I think, the best) was the original and not the altered one. The bass version is here crossed through in pencil, and "For Guadagni"—with whom Handel was evidently much taken—written over; then follows the alto version (page 132 in Arnold, which is the version in Smith's Buckingham Palace and Hamburg copies) with its horrid "divisions," also marked "For Guadagni." This latter is again entirely in Handel's handwriting, making the third original MS. in this most interesting copy. There is still another slightly altered alto setting, of which I cannot trace the original MS., in Arnold, and the piece has been transposed to G minor in the Foundling copy. This last copy, bequeathed to the hospital by Handel, was probably written after his death, and I am inclined to think no particular care was taken to make it in close agreement with the author's original intentions, but rather in harmony with the manner in which it happened to be performed by the singers of the day.

The original version of "How beautiful" is the G minor song, with a second part to the words "Their sound is gone out." This second part was afterwards cut out, and the chorus in E flat to those words composed. This and the fine duet and chorus version in D minor, also a later composition, are in an appendix in the original MS. (see again the photolith copy). In the Dublin copy Handel writes the name of Frasi, and the Boy, and puts again "For Guadagni, ex C" (sic). This slightly altered and impoverished version in C minor is printed in Arnold, page 150. The original MS. of this is apparently lost, as is the air version of "Their sound is gone out" in F, which is also in the appendix of the original MS., but in Smith's handwriting, with Beard's name attached. Did Smith also compose it?

In the original MS. of the alto duet and chorus version of "How beautiful," which must have been much sung at one time, for Handel has written the names of Beard, Low, Mrs. Clive, Signora Avolio (three times), the second alto part seems to have been altered to suit the latter lady, for it is transposed nearly throughout an octave higher in pencil. The 29th and 30th bars of the first alto are likewise put an octave above. The chorus of this piece is very fine; one point where the basses start the theme in A minor is particularly striking. It deserves to be revived.\*

The version of "Why do the nations" in Arnold, page 161, is merely the great song ending at bar 38, with a short recitative tacked on. It was ridiculous to print the opening twice. The original MS. of this recitative is in the Dublin copy again. The air thus abbreviated and the recitative are in the Hamburg copy. Reinhold first sang this fine song. Arnold, and Mozart, who worked probably from Arnold's edition, have marked the chorus "Let us break their bonds," *Larghetto e staccato*; Novello has it properly, *Allegro e staccato*.

In the 38th bar of "Thou shalt break them," the first violin has in the original MS. the following :—



and not, as in the Smith copies and the various editions, the following :—




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\* See an important note about the many versions of "How beautiful," in Schoelcher's Life, p. 294.

Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's copy gives it as in the original. These notes are written in Handel's usual bold, clear, and vigorous manner,\* and I incline to believe these are the proper notes. Beard and Low sang this song. After the song in the Dublin copy there is a recitative in Smith's writing as a substitute for it. The first chord of this joins it to the previous recitative. I do not find Handel's MS. of this, nor is it in any edition I know of. This is it:—

Thou shalt break them with a rod of i - ron,

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's ves - sel.

The "Hallelujah" chorus first began in the first violin part with the upper D (see the photolith copy). Handel altered this to the lower D, thus making the phrase identical with the opening of an alto song, "Se pugnar non sai," in *Il Siroe* of Hasse, written about twenty years after. Handel and he both repeat the phrase on the dominant.† The passage usually sung *piano*, beginning

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\* Mendelssohn, in his preface to *Israel*, speaks of the great accuracy of Handel's MS. scores.

† It would be easy to point out many such coincidences not yet, perhaps, brought to notice, but the following may be cited:—The first is that a bass song, "Te solo adoro," in Jomelli's *Betulia Libe-*



with the words "The kingdom of this world," is the fourth strain of the Choral Mendelssohn has introduced into *St. Paul* to the words "Sleepers wake." In Bennett and Goldschmidt's Choral Book this tune is said to have been first printed in Philipp Nicolai's "Freudenspiegel des ewigen Lebens, Frankfurt-a-M., 1599," and the harmonies given by Bennett and Goldschmidt are all but identical with Handel's. Possibly Handel, who must have been familiar with the tune, wished to introduce a portion of it into this chorus: if so, it was done without much consideration, for the strain twice repeated as in the Choral, is too short to fit the sense of the words. Mozart has been unfortunate in doubling the soprano passage an octave below at bar 38 from the end of this chorus. There are no marks of *piano* and *forte* throughout this piece in Handel's MS.

The air "I know that my Redeemer liveth," with all its beauty, is over-long after so much music, and might be judiciously cut. Signore Avolio, Francesina, and Frasi, and "the Boy" sang this song. England then apparently had no good soprano singer.

The two short *grave* choruses, "Since by man" and "For as in Adam" are generally sung by the solo quartett, but this ought not to prevent Mozart's superb trombone parts being played *pianissimo*.\* The excision of his hautboys would be an advantage with only one voice to a part.

*rata*, contains the germs of the last movement of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony; and that nearly all the tune of the "Marseillaise" is made use of in the opening chorus of Salieri's opera of *Palmira*, produced at the Imperial Theatre at Vienna in 1795. Did Boucher really compose the tune, or was it not probably some stock Italian opera theme running in his head, and also in that of Salieri?

\* It is remarkable that Mozart has only written trombones to these short movements, and to the opening of the overture.

I have already mentioned that in "The trumpet shall sound," Mozart has again put in the necessary dot after the rest in bar 2 and other similar bars. He has also assigned many of the difficult trumpet passages to the horn, and has cut out a good deal of the music. Much of the other horn parts is very valuable in this air, especially the low notes of the second horn.

The use by Mozart of two violas obbligato in the duet "O death" is very happy, reminding one of Bach. He also alters the bassi into cello solo. Arnold and others again print this twice, as if there were two different compositions; but in fact, Handel, finding it long, made a cut of fourteen bars, beginning at bar 6, inserting at the end of bar 5 three quavers, thus:—

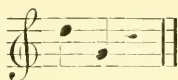


to make it fit together. These three notes caused Arnold to imagine there were two distinct duets! The upper part was sung by Signora Galli and Guadagni, the under by Beard, Low, and Francesina (!), of course an octave higher.

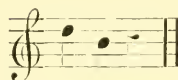
"If God is for us" was to be sung by Francesina, the Boy, and also by Galli, and Guadagni (the never-failing), but "ex C moll." It is also crossed out entirely in the Dublin copy. In the 38th and 39th bars this copy has a trifling alteration of the accents, making it "God is *for* us," instead of "if God is for *us*." The original gives the following to the first violin at bar 101:—



and the same dots two bars later, and at bar 115 this—

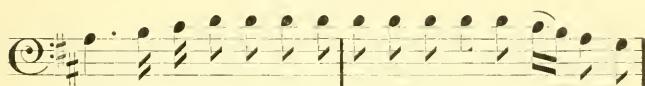


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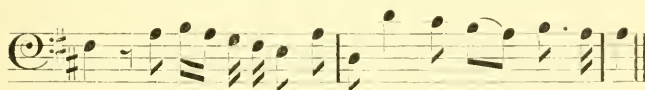


Mozart has altered the air altogether.

In the Dublin copy Handel made an arrangement doing away entirely with the “Amen” chorus. He altered the subject of the *Larghetto* thus:—

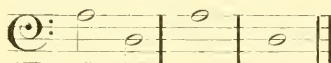


Blessing and honour, glory and pow'r be un - to God, be un - to



God for ev - er and ev - er. A - men A - - men.

and at the end of the movement has put the following notes in pencil:—



ev - er. A - men.

Handel appears to have found these two choruses, both in D, too long on another occasion; for in the original MS. there is a cut in pencil, commencing on the last crotchet of the 16th bar of the movement “Blessing and honour,” to the last crotchet of the 30th bar. This is really judicious, and to be greatly commended, for the bars cut out are weak.

The performance of *Messiah* now-a-days is not quite

what it should be. When called on some years ago to conduct the work for the first time, I was struck with a certain rugged baldness in the execution, owing to a want of marks of expression in the orchestral and choral parts, though the band was composed of our best performers, who played with the same excellence they are accustomed to show in every concert-room.

This want of gradation struck me the more, perhaps, as I had obtained it from the band of the Philharmonic Society, having seen that all the orchestral parts were accurately marked, in most cases by my own hand.

Mozart has here and there done something to remedy this, especially in "But who may abide," but not enough, and the incessant *piano* in the songs with the *forte* in the symphonies is tiresome to a degree. We have already seen that Dr. Crotch has said that all these *nuances* were taught at the rehearsals.\* But the *Messiah* is never rehearsed now, owing to its music being known literally by heart by almost every performer. Something is then required to bring the performance up to the mark of the present day, by a marking of bowing, of *piano* and *forte*, of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, throughout; crispness is as much wanting in some places as tenderness in others. Handel, no doubt, obtained variety of effect by swaying the forces under his command at the time, and by his use of the signs *con ripieni* and *senza ripieni*, incessantly occurring in the Dublin copy. At present the solo singers alone attend to the expressive performance of their music—they studying it at home—whereas the orchestral and choral parts are destitute of nearly everything but notes, and the see-saw of *piano* and

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\* Burney says *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, and *lento* occur for the first time, as far as he is aware, in a curtain tune in Lock's *Tempest* music.






































*forte* I speak of in the songs. Of course I would not for one moment have these markings made except with sound discretion.

Lastly, I cannot help thinking some, not all, of the *tempi* of Handel's music are, in the aiming at some supposed classical ideal, frequently dragged. But it should not be forgotten that Handel himself had no idea of making sacred music dull. He had no two styles, one secular and the other sacred ; his operatic manner is identical with his oratorian ; a proof, if required, being found in his appropriating the music of some Italian love-duets in order to make sacred choruses for *Messiah*. With a view to some understanding, therefore, about the *tempi* of *Messiah*, I deem it advisable to give the metronome indications of two eminent old musicians—Horsley and Sir George Smart—who, the one through the Cramers,\* the other through Joah Bates, probably have retained the right and true tradition. Sir George Smart, in a memorandum kindly lent me by Mr. Lamborn Cock, says :—" Joah Bates, Esq., was the first conductor of the concerts of ancient music, then held in Tottenham Street ; I, as a chorister-boy in the Chapel Royal, was appointed to turn over the leaves of the score for him. This gave me the opportunity of noticing the *times* in which the various movements in this oratorio were then taken." I have been permitted by Miss Smart's courtesy to take a copy of these for this paper. It will be seen that they are, on the whole, the quickest of any. Vincent Novello's being in the hands of nearly every one, it is not necessary to quote them.























































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\* The father of J. B. Cramer and François Cramer was the leading violin in the band of the 1784 Commemoration. See Horsley's preface about *tempi*, also Sir Henry Bishop's preface to his edition of Handel's songs.

The *tempi* of Sir George Smart, marked with an asterisk, are brisker than any published metronome times I have met with.

					SIR G. SMART.		HORSLEY.	
Overture—Grave	...	...	...	...		= 60		= 60
Fugue	...	...	...	...		= 116		= 126
Comfort ye	...	...	...	...		= 80		= 80
Every valley	..	...	...	...		= 152		= 88
And the glory	...	..	...	...		= 116		= 116
Thus saith the Lord	...	...	...	...		= 76	...	
But who may abide	...	...	...	...		= 96		= 88
Prestissimo	...	...	...	...		= 138		= 120
And He shall purify	...	...	...	...		= 144		= 132
O Thou that tellest	...	...	...	...		= 138		= 126
For behold	...	...	...	...		= 80		= 60
The people that walked	...	...	...	...		= 144		= 72
For unto us	...	...	...	...		= 152		= 80
Pastoral Symphony	...	...	...	...	...			= 92
And lo ! (Recit.)	...	...	...	...		= 104		= 72
And suddenly	...	..	...	...	...			= 72
Glory to God	...	...	...	...		= 88		= 76
Rejoice	...	...	...	...		= 104		= 96
He shall feed	...	...	...	...		= 112		= 50
His yoke is easy	...	...	...	...		= 144		= 132
Behold the Lamb	...	...	...	...		= 88		= 56
He was despised	...	...	...	...		= 72		= 63
Surely	...	...	...	...		= 88		= 72
And with His stripes	...	...	...	...		= 96		= 88

## SIR G. SMART. HORSLEY.

All we like sheep ... ..		= 100 ...		= 132
Adagio ... ..		= 80 ..		= 66
All they that see Him ... ..		= 80 ...		= 60
He trusted in God ... ..		= 88 ...		= 72
Behold and see ... ..		= 69 ...		= 6c
But Thou didst not leave ... ..		= 108 ...		= 104
Lift up your heads ... ..		= 88 ...		= 76
Let all the angels ... ..		= 92 ...		= 80
Thou art gone up ... ..		= 96 ...		= 96
The Lord gave the word ... ..		= 72 ...		= 66
How beautiful (Song in G minor) ... ..		= 108 ...		= 96
Their sound is gone out (E $\flat$ Chorus) ... ..		= 88 ...		= 80
Why do the nations ... ..		= 120 ...		= 108
Let us break ... ..		= 104 ...		= 88
Thou shalt break them ... ..		= 108 ...		= 88
Hallelujah ... ..		= 144 ...		= 66
I know that my Redeemer ... ..		= 72 ...		= 66
Since by man ... ..		= 60 ...		= 52
By man came also ... ..		= 92 ...		= 92
The trumpet shall sound ... ..		= 100 ...		= 92
O death ... ..		= 104 ...		= 92
But thanks ... ..		= 152 ...		= 112
If God be for us .. ..		= 98 ..		= 88
Worthy is the Lamb ... ..		= 60 ...		= 54
Andante ... ..		= 116 .		= 132
Larghetto ... ..		= 80 ...		= 69
Amen ... ..		= 92 ...		= 84

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